DEMOCRATIC

GERMAN REPORT

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"CALL 4 POWER CONFERENCE"

E. German Parliament Appeals to House of Commons

The British House of Commons should join in calling a Four Power Conference for the re-unification of Germany, the People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic proposed in an appeal specially directed to all members of the British Parliament.

The appeal of the People's Chamber, which was dispatched on April 11th and published on April 18th, stated:

"The Presidium of the People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic, feeling deep concern about present political developments, addresses itself to the members of the British House of Commons.

"Only eight years after the end of the war, Europe is once again in a state of critical tension. The same forces which twice in recent history have plunged the nations into catastrophe are increasingly active in the territory of the West German Federal Republic.

"Krupp, the arms magnate, whom every British citizen, too, rightly identifies with armaments and war, has regained his position of power. Herr Hjalmar Schacht, who organised Hitler's rearmament programme, makes repeated journeys in Africa and Asia in the interests of West German financial and industrial circles and initiates new commercial and political intrigues aimed against other nations.

"Official British statements have demonstrated that public life in West Germany is increasingly dominated by active nazis; the offices of the Bonn Government are filled with the sworn enemies of peace and democracy.

"The Bonn Government, with Washington's support, is reorganising the old Hitlerite army. Hitler's generals are being given command of a military instrument of power which, by its very nature, could only become the instrument of renewed agression.

"This is a threat to the peace and security of all nations. The Bonn Government is already pursuing a policy of diplomatic threats and blackmail against France, creating a separatist movement in Alsace-Lorraine, and beginning to claim colonies.

"The aggressive plans regarding eastern Europe drawn up by the Bonn Government, and supported by certain circles in the U. S. A., have the avowed aim of involving

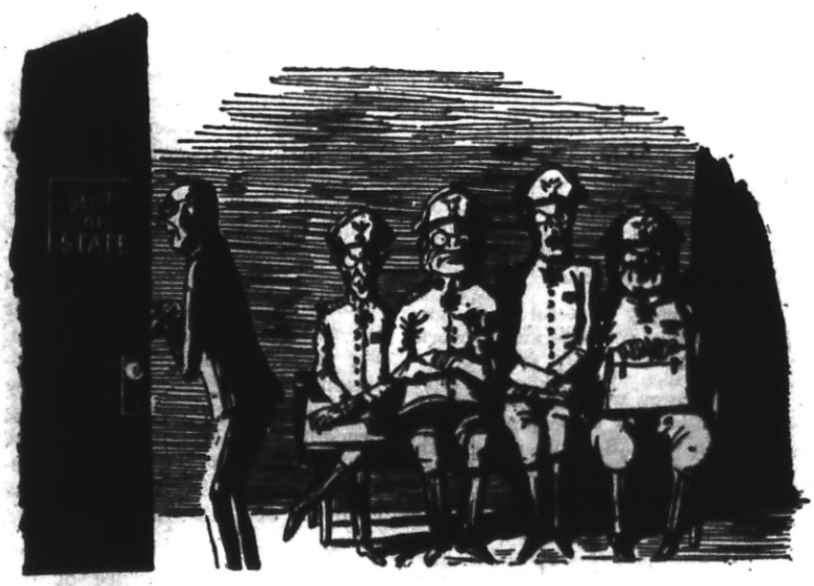
(cont. on p. 2)

WEST GERMAN ARRESTS

The arrests of West German friends of peace, particularly young people, continued unabated in the past two weeks. Particularly brutal was the arrest of 29 young people staying the night at a youth hostel in Moehnesee.

The young people, who were making a holiday trip, were wakened early in the morning to find themselves surrounded by a detachment of West German mobile police armed with tommy guns. The "father" of the youth hostel and many of the other guests turned out to be disguised detectives, who fell upon the boys and girls and drove them into waiting police cars with batons and their fists.

WASHINGTON VISIT



"Sir, the West German Freedom Committee to liberate Eastern Europe is here." *(National Guardian, New York)*

U. S. NOVELIST MOVES TO EAST GERMANY

Stefan Heym Sends Medal Back to Eisenhower

German-born American novelist Stefan Heym, author of "The Crusaders" and other best sellers, has moved to East Germany, where he will live and work in future.

After arriving in East Germany, Stefan Heym made the following statement on April 15th:

"The steadily increasing drive towards fascism and war by the United States Government is making it almost impossible for any honest writer within the United States to function in his handicraft and to bring his work to the American public.

"A native-born American writer has only the choice between losing his integrity by writing what the F.B.I., the State Department, and Big Business will approve, or being hounded for writing the truth, while seeing his work barred from publication.

"For the American writer of foreign birth, the choice lies between being silent on what is happening to his adopted land as well as on the imperialist war going on and in preparation, or speaking out and being deprived of his American citizenship, with an extended stay on Ellis Island or in any of the concentration camps already set up, and subsequent deportation, facing him.

"I have therefore left the United States and have applied for political asylum for myself and my family in the German Democratic Republic.

"I am deeply grateful that the Government of the German Democratic Republic not only has granted me asylum but also citizenship. I am deeply grateful to find that here, in the German Democratic Republic, the most sacred of rights is the right of the citizen to speak out for peace, freedom and democracy.

"I am deeply grateful that here I can continue to write and to work for these aims.

"My decision was strengthened by my unwillingness to be pressed into service in the U.S. Army along with disease-carrying fleas and spiders, and shoulder to shoulder with condemned nazi war criminals.

"I therefore have returned to the President of the United States my commission as an officer in the Reserve Corps of the U.S. Army. Together with my resignation I have returned to the President of the United States the Bronze Star Medal given to me during World War Two for service above and beyond the call of duty in the Battle of the Bulge.

"I cannot keep a medal which has been dishonored in the brutal and unjust war against the Korean people."

Stefan Heym's best-known books include "Hostages", published in 1942 by Putnams in New York and London, and later made into a film starring William Bendix; "The Crusaders", published after the war by Little, Brown, in New York, and Cassell, in London, and subsequently translated into 23 languages; and "The Eyes of Reason" published by the same firms in the U.S. and Britain, and also translated into many languages.

(cont from page 1)

"CALL 4 POWER CONFERENCE"

the nations of western Europe, including the British people, in a devastating war.

"History has shown that it would be a mistake to gamble upon the chance of keeping within bounds a reviving West German imperialism and militarism, channeling its aim of attack in only one direction. This false speculation was already made once before, in the Hitler era. It had frightful consequences for humanity and the British people were amongst those who suffered most.

"Faced with this dangerous situation we declare emphatically: The best guarantee for a lasting peace in Europe is a Germany genuinely freed from imperialism and militarism; a Germany which has abandoned, once and for all, every attempt at conquest and all craving for revenge; a Germany which devotes all its energies to peaceful construction; a Germany which neither seeks to obtain raw materials by means of an exhausting fight for markets based upon dumping and wage cuts, nor by means of a new colonialism, but through peaceful economic relations with all nations. The policy of hampering and destroying peaceful trade relations with the eastern nations harms West German economy just as it harms the economy of Great Britain.

"We regard the earliest convocation of a conference of the Four Great Powers, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, the United Staates and France, as the best and quickest way of achieving a peaceful solution of the German problem in the interests of the world.

"The Bonn Government has repeatedly expressed its opposition to a conference of the Four Great Powers and bases its policy upon the exploitation of differences between the great powers. We, however, believe that nothing is more urgent for the German people than the conclusion of a peace treaty and the restoration of German unity on the basis of peace and democracy.

"A conference of the Four Powers could pave the way for effective measures for the re-unification of Germany and the democratisation of its institutions. Such a conference could also give the German people effective help in creating a real and lasting policy of peace.

"The German and British peoples are linked by their joint and supreme interest in the preservation of peace. The treaties of Bonn and Paris are absolutely contrary to this aim. That is why we are confident that the members of the British House of Commons agree with us in the desire to choose the road of peaceful understanding between the nations.

"We express the belief that, to achieve this ultimate aim, they will join with us in demanding the early convocation of a Four Power Conference."

Bonn Discovers "Spy Plot", Arrests Businessmen

West German detectives swooped on more than forty homes in West Germany early on April 10th and arrested the occupants, mainly businessmen, alleged to be members of a "spy ring".

Observers in Berlin pointed out that many of those arrested had been active in trade between East and West Germany, and that American wishes to stop all such trade might be one of the reasons for the sudden police action. It was also pointed out that the arrests coincided with renewed attempts to bring about a settlement of the German problem, and that the sudden announcement of a "spy plot" could be intended to obstruct such attempts.

One of those arrested was Andrew Thorndike, Holder of the National Prize of the German Democratic Republic, a noted film director. Herr Thorndike, who lives in East Germany, was lured to West Berlin by means of a forged telegram purporting to come from a member of his family, and there arrested.

West German Navy Planned

Detailed plans for the reconstruction of the West German navy have already been drawn up, the "Hamburger Abendblatt" reported on April 8th. The keels of the first naval units are likely to be laid in the next few months.

The paper stated that West German naval experts were pressing for the reconstruction of the U-boat fleet, allegedly only for "reconnaisance" purposes.

Other reports from Hamburg stated that the WUMAG Engineering Works in Hamburg, recently purchased by Oskar Henschel, a locomotive manufacturer, would shortly begin with the production of diesel motors for U-boats.

Adenauer Wants Killers Released

West German Chancellor Adenauer requested the release of 515 German war criminals still held in jails in the American Zone, during his talks in Washington early in April.

The war criminals still serving sentences in American controlled prisons are largely concentration camp guards and Gestapo men who were originally sentenced to death but later had their sentences reduced.

CLOTHES RATIONING ENDS IN EAST GERMANY

Canteen Meals — Big Improvement

Rationing of all forms of clothing and shoes ended in East Germany on April 13th as another big step was taken towards the final abolition of ration cards.

The abolition of textile rationing, with the single exception of clothes and equipment for nursing babies, was decided on at a meeting of the Cabinet of the German Democratic Republic on April 9th.

The cabinet also decreed other important steps to raise the standard of living, including the doubling of the quantity of meat, fat and sugar provided off-the-ration for use in preparing canteen meals in factories and offices.

A sign of the great improvement in the supply of the population was the fact that the Cabinet also decided that the time had come to abolish the special extra ration cards granted to scientists, professors, technicians and other intellectuals.

These special ration cards were oroginally granted in the immediate post-war period, when normal rations were so low that creative mental work was almost impossible. In the meantime normal rations have been greatly increased, and supplies of off-the-ration meat etc., have become so plentiful that special ration cards are no longer necessary.

The Cabinet also decided that a further step to the final abolition of rationing should be taken by ceasing the issue of ration cards to certain categories of individuals. These included owners of private industrial enterprises employing more than five persons, landlords, private wholesalers etc.

The development of a prosperous planned economy in the German Democratic Republic has made it possible for private businessmen to earn a good and secure livelihood — the turnover of private shops, for instance, rose by 29 % in 1952 — and they can now buy all the food they need on the free market, at prices above those for rationed goods but well within their reach.

Commenting on the new orders, the Berlin newspaper "Neues Deutschland", organ of the Socialist Unity Party, stated:

"There is an enormous contrast between the policy of our Government, which aims at continually raising the standard of living of our population, and the policy of preparation for war which is being pursued in West Germany and West Berlin.

"Here we have a steady upward development, with an uninterrupted increase in the turn-over of goods; there there is a steady reduction in the goods available for the great majority of the population, through the unceasing increase in prices and taxes, partly concealed behind a shining facade of luxury living for a few rich people.

"Between the end of 1948 and the end of 1952 the price of flour in West Germany rose by 53%, bread 77%, beef 70%. In West Germany millions live in continual fear of losing their means of support, while in the German Democratic Republic the working people can look forward to the future full of confidence, since the planned expansion of our economy and the creation of the foundations of Socialism gives the guarantee for a steady improvement in the standard of living.

"Everybody must realise that it will only be possible to improve the standard of living of the working people systematically if the 1953 Economic Plan is completely fulfilled in the spirit of the slogan: 'Produce more and produce more economically'. That is the reason for the campaign for strictest economy, the struggle to increase labour productivity and the reduction of costs by fixing new working norms."

THE GERMAN PROBLEM CAN BE SOLVED

By Walter Ulbricht, Deputy Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic

The people of Germany, and in particular of West Germany, are asking themselves whether there will be negotiations and a settlement of the German problem.

In the present situation, in which the people hope that the governments of all countries will treat with understanding the proposals which have been made to prevent a new war and secure peace, one government has acted in a provocative manner. This is the government in Bonn, West Germany.

Contrary to the wishes of the majority of the population of West Germany the war treaties of Bonn and Paris were driven through the Bonn Parliament, and important democratic basic rights were taken away.

W. German War Base

After his putsch West German Chancellor Adenauer travelled to the United States, to announce that the big business bosses and militarists on the Rhine and the Ruhr were ready to place West Germany at the disposal of the U. S. as a war base.

The Bonn regime wants to use West Germany as a storm troop against peaceable patriotic forces in France, Belgium, Holland, Britain and Denmark, as well as against the German Democratic Republic, the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.

As part of this campaign the Bonn Government is persecuting the youth in West Germany, cancelling the freedom of the press, allowing fascist old-soldiers' organisations to re-establish themselves, and demanding the release of the war criminals, the high-ranking officers of the Hitler-regime.

Persecution & Arrests

In order to show the bankers and big businessmen of the U. S. A. that the Bonn Government wants to fight the Soviet Union, Adenauer has ordered the persecution of members of the German-Soviet Friendship Society, and police searches of the offices of the organisation.

Businessmen have been arrested for the sole reason that they took part in East-West trade. Attempts are made to cow certain business circles in West Germany by making accusations of espionage against those who take part in East-West trade.

In this oppressive semi-fascist atmosphere, Germans have bravely raised their voices and called for a coalition of all patriotic forces for the great task of maintaining peace and re-establishing German unity. The "German Assembly", led by Dr. Wirth and ex-Lord-Mayor Elfes has issued an appeal for understanding, — not understanding with the Americans, such as Dr. Adenauer practises, but understanding between the representatives of East and West Germany.

There can be no doubt that the American and British Governments will only respect the national interests of Germany and the wishes of the democratic forces in Germany when they are forced to do so by the patriotic people's movement.

Everyone who desires an understanding between Germans from East and West Germany, and who wants a Four Power Conference for the peaceful solution of the German problem must help to build the most powerful national resistance against the treaties of Bonn and Paris.

Unity of Action

The appearance of the "German Assembly", the millions of signatures obtained to the petition for the unity of Germany and the maintenance of peace have shown that there is a force which can compel national reunification and the salvation of peace.

This Force is the unity in action of the workers—the Communists, the Social Democrats, the non-party workers and the Christian workers.

This force is the unity of all patriotic forces, ranging from the workers in the factory to the patriotic circles of the middle class.

This force of German patriots can only become effective when it closes its ranks firmly, and raises the banner of re-unification, democracy and peace despite all the obstacles imposed by the Adenauer regime.

The first task is the revelation of the anti-national and anti-democratic character of the Bonn and Paris treaties. The slogan must be: "Not a man, not a pfennig for this system of national betrayal."

The second task is to unmask all measures taken by the imperialist occupation powers and the Bonn Government towards converting West Germany into a military basis for the U. S. A.

The third task is the development of the fight of the workers and the whole people for the protection of democratic rights; resistance to the anti-democratic measures of the Bonn regime; the fight against the re-establishment of the Stahlheim and other militaristic and fascist bands; the fight for the right of trade union organisation, the right of assembly, the right to the free expression of opinion.

Struggle Against Burdens

The fourth task is the struggle against the burdens imposed by the militarisation of West Germany; the fight for higher wages and a smaller military budget. Up with wages, down with the profits of big business and the bankers!

The fifth task is to explain to the young people and the members of the ex-soldiers' associations the criminal plans of the West German authorities, who want to sell German youth as mercenaries and serfs to the American, British and French millionaires.

The sixth task is to explain to the women the real reasons for the increasing need, the real reasons for the failure to provide equal rights for women, and to mobilise the women to fight against Adenauer's crimes.

The will of the German people for national existence will prove itself stronger than the enslaving treaties concluded by the Bonn authorities.

U. S. TO FETE GERMANS

Wiesbaden, Germany, April 14 (UP) — A former aide to Nazi air chief Hermann Goering and thirty-five other officer veterans of the German "Richthofen" air squadron will be feted by the United States Air Force here April 21, it was announced today.

The Air Force said that Richthofen veterans of two world wars would be flown to the United States airbase at Landstuhl where they will be shown late-model American jets and watch an aerial parade.

GESTAPO SPY GETS $24,000 SALARY

"Union Leader" Who Worked for Nazis

A Gestapo agent, who denounced anti-nazis to the secret police during the Hitler era is today earning a tax-free salary of $ 24,000 annually as an official of the international board which runs the Montan Union, the international authority which controls the steel and coal trusts of western Europe.

The man who signed the letter of denunciation reproduced on this page is named Hans vom Hoff. Throughout the nazi era he occupied a comfortable position as an official of the Hansa Burial Aid Society, and worked on the side as a Gestapo informant.

After 1945 Hans vom Hoff, with the support of the American Military Government, which was fully informed about his past history, became prominent in the trade union movement in the American Zone, and later rose to the post of vice-chairman of the West German Trade Union Federation.

In this position he again and again sold out the interests of the trade union members in West Germany, and was one of the loudest supporters of a revived nazi Wehrmacht in West Germany.

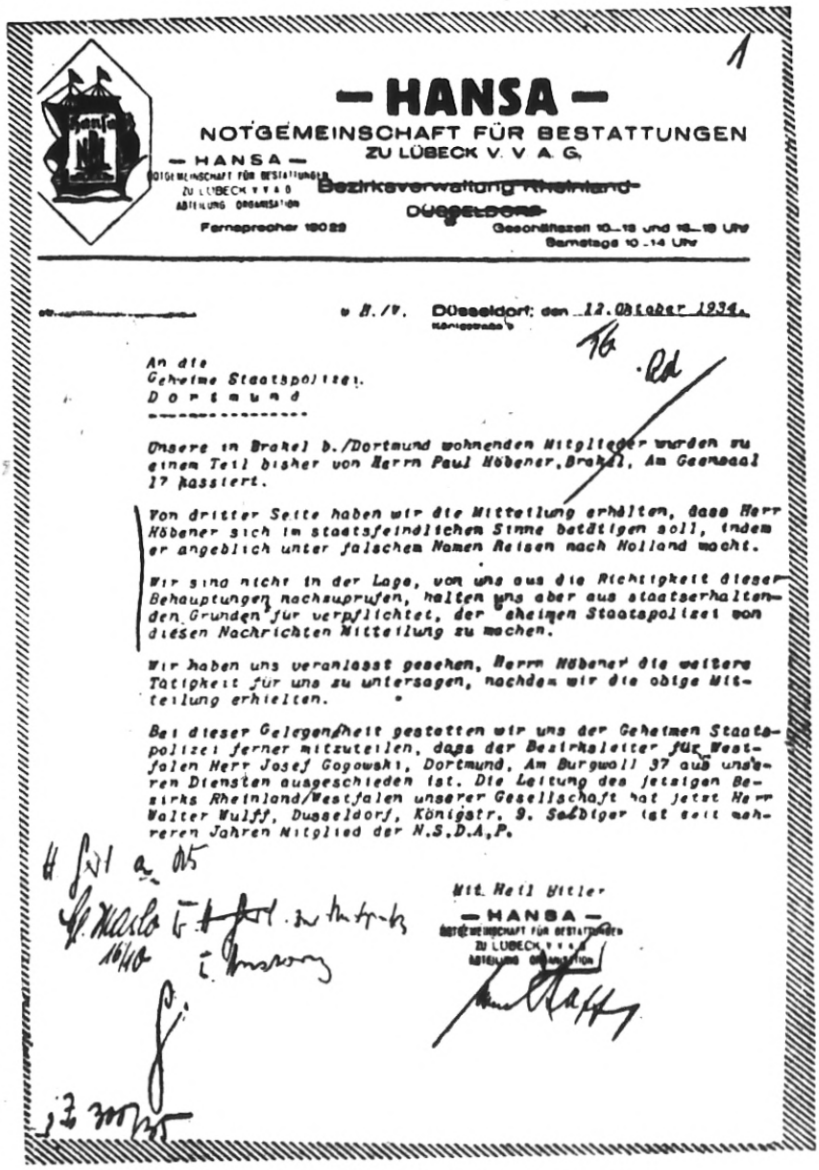
When the Montan Union was formed as a result of the Schuman Plan, Hans vom Hoff was named by the trade union federation leadership as liaison officer, with a big salary.

In October 1952 the annual conference of the West German Trade Union Federation voted him out of his post in the union leadership, but his friends the big steel trusts immediately gave him the lucrative post which he now occupies.

(As GERMAN REPORT goes to press comes news that publication in East German papers of the news of Hoff's activities as a Gestapo agent had forced the West German Trade Union Federation leadership to undertake an investigation into his past record.

Fascists Wreck Union Youth Club

Members of a neo-fascist youth group raided and demolished the youth club of the West German Trade Union Federation in Buesum, British Zone, on April 12th. After smashing all the furniture they smeared swastikas on the walls.



— HANSA —
NOTGEMEINSCHAFT FÜR BESTATTUNGEN
ZU LÜBECK V. V. A. G.
— HANSA —
NOTGEMEINSCHAFT FÜR BESTATTUNGEN
ZU LÜBECK V V A G
ABTEILUNG ORGANISATION
Bezirksverwaltung Rheinland
DÜSSELDORF
Fernsprecher 19029
Geschäftszeit 10–13 und 15–19 Uhr
Samstags 10–14 Uhr

1

V. B./V. Düsseldorf, den 12. Oktober 1934.
Königsstraße

An die
Geheime Staatspolizei
D o r t m u n d

Unsere in Brakel b./Dortmund wohnenden Mitglieder wurden zu einem Teil bisher von Herrn Paul Höbener, Brakel, Am Geensaal 17 kassiert.

Von dritter Seite haben wir die Mitteilung erhalten, dass Herr Höbener sich in staatsfeindlichem Sinne betätigen soll, indem er angeblich unter falschem Namen Reisen nach Holland macht.

Wir sind nicht in der Lage, von uns aus die Richtigkeit dieser Behauptungen nachzuprüfen, halten uns aber aus staatserhaltenden Gründen für verpflichtet, der Geheimen Staatspolizei von diesen Nachrichten Mitteilung zu machen.

Wir haben uns veranlasst gesehen, Herrn Höbener die weitere Tätigkeit für uns zu untersagen, nachdem wir die obige Mitteilung erhielten.

Bei dieser Gelegenheit gestatten wir uns der Geheimen Staatspolizei ferner mitzuteilen, dass der Bezirksleiter für Westfalen Herr Josef Gogowski, Dortmund, Am Burgwall 37 aus unseren Diensten ausgeschieden ist. Die Leitung des jetzigen Bezirks Rheinland/Westfalen unserer Gesellschaft hat jetzt Herr Walter Wulff, Duesseldorf, Königstr. 9. Letzterer ist seit mehreren Jahren Mitglied der N.S.D.A.P.

Mit Heil Hitler
— HANSA —
NOTGEMEINSCHAFT FÜR BESTATTUNGEN
ZU LÜBECK V V A G
ABTEILUNG ORGANISATION

(Translation)

Duesseldorf, October 12th, 1934

The Secret State Police (Gestapo)
Dortmund

The premiums of our members living in Brakel near Dortmund have hitherto been collected by Herr Paul Hoebener, 17 Am Geensaal, Brakel.

We have received information from a third person that Herr Hoebener conducts himself in a manner inimical to the state, in that he allegedly travels to Holland using a false name.

We are not able to check the truth of this charge ourselves, but feel ourselves obliged, for the preservation of the state, to pass this information on to the Gesapo.

After receiving the information given above we found it necessary to forbid Herr Hoebener from acting for us any longer.

We should like to take this opportunity of informing the Gestapo that Herr Josef Gogowski, 37 Am Burgwall, Dortmund, the district agent for Westphalia, has left our service. The management of the present district Rhineland-Westphalia for our company is in the hands of Herr Walter Wulff, 9 Koenigsstrasse, Duesseldorf, who has been a member of the N. S. D. A. P. (Nazi Party, ed.) for some years.

Heil Hitler!
Hans vom Hoff

GESTAPO "ACTED IRREPROACHABLY"

Whitewashing History's Worst Criminals

The officers and men of Himmler's Gestapo "did their work in a correct, decent and irreproachable manner.

This incredible sentence is to be found, not in a document issued during the Hitler era but in a memorandum issued in 1953 by the "Federation of German Police Officials" in West Germany.

The memorandum was addressed to the West German Government and the provincial and city authorities responsible for the police force, as part of a campaign for the reinstatement of former Gestapo officials, insofar as they have not been able to get back into West German police forces.

Here are some of the more outrageous statements made in the course of this memorandum:

"The historical development of the political police shows clearly that the State Police of the Third Reich was not something invented by National Socialism, but simply a continuation of the previous department IA, which provided protection for the government in the democratic (pre-Hitler, ed.) republic.

"The legal tasks given to the Gestapo were the same as those performed by all other political police forces.

"The tasks of the Gestapo had no basic difference from tasks of the former department IA, and the political police of other civilised nations."

(Hitler's Germany was therefore a civilised nation, and the liquidation of millions of people, the spying, the torture, and all the other Gestapo methods are the normal tasks of the police in other civilised nations, ed.)

"In the interests of justice it must be emphasised that well over half the prisoners in concentration camps were dangerous habitual criminals."

(Even if this were true, which it is not, it would be no excuse for torturing, starving and gassing both the criminals and the political and racial prisoners, ed.)

"If the circumstances are considered objectively, the officials of the Jewish Section of the Gestapo cannot even be held responsible for the deportation of the Jews, and still less for their liquidation, since they knew nothing about the fate which was awaiting the Jews in the camps at Auschwitz, etc.

"The mass of the Gestapo had nothing to do with the deportation and extermination of the Jews."

(If one believes this memorandum, then the six million men, women and children gassed in the concentration camps all committed suicide, for noone was responsible for massacring them, ed.)

"The officials did their unpopular work in a correct, decent and irreproachable manner."

(The memorandum then goes on to quote from a statement made by Dr Robert Lehr, West German Minister of the Interior in the Press Bulletin of the West German Government, on February 14th 1952. In this statement Dr Lehr claimed that most long service civil servants had "resisted Hitler".)

"This is also basically true for the great majority of the officials of the former Gestapo. In their service in the Gestapo they did nothing else than their duty as they had learned it, and fulfilled the tasks set them according to the regulations which were in force."

* * *

Here is an extract from the very sober judgement rendered at Nuremberg on September 30th 1946 by the four judges of the International Military Tribunal, Lord Justice Lawrence (Great Britain), Mr. Francis Biddle (United States), Major-General Nikichenko (Soviet Union) and Professor Donnedieu de Vabre (France):

"The Gestapo and S.D. (Security Services) were used for purposes which were criminal under the charter, involving the persecution and extermination of the Jews, brutalities and killings in concentration camps, excesses in the administration of occupied territories, the administration of the slave labour programme, and the mistreatment and murder of prisoners of war. In dealing with the Gestapo the Tribunal includes all executive and administrative officials of the Reichssicherheits-Hauptamt concerned with Gestapo administration, and all local Gestapo officials serving both inside and outside Germany.

"The Tribunal declares to be criminal the group composed of those members of the Gestapo and S.D. holding the positions enumerated in the preceding paragraph... The basis for this finding is the participation of the organisation in war crimes and crimes against humanity connected with the war."

West German "Democrats"

Nazi Colonel Rudel.

Nazi fighter ace Hans Ulrich Rudel, leader of a neo-nazi group living in the Argentine, has revived the call for "Lebensraum" (living space) which was one of the main features of Hitler's propaganda.

In a pamphlet entitled "The Front Line Soldiers on Rearmament", published by the Free Democratic Party in the British Zone of West Germany, Rudel stated:

"We shall be ready to go to war again if it pays us: that is to say if the necessary Lebensraum is provided for our people".

In the course of his pamphlet Rudel described the nazi regime as "a new social order"

Dr. Ehlers.

Dr. Hermann Ehlers, Chairman of the West German Parliament, speaking in Hamburg, British Zone, on April 19th stated:

"We can never forget that it has been and that it remains the endeavour of every German to conquer the east and the south-east".

Dr. Ehlers was addressing a conference of the Christian Democratic Party, the party of Chancellor Adenauer. The conference adopted a new flag, consisting of the German flag decorated with the German eagle and a cross.

Professor Ludwig Erhard.

The West German Economics Minister, Professor Ludwig Erhard, announced in Bonn on April 18th that West German industry would develop a "murderous battle" against Britain's export market.

"The Federal Government will do everything necessary to help drive French and British competition out of the field" he stated.

"The American promise to place big orders in Germany means that the United States Government will sponsor the rebuilding of Federal Germany's armament industries in the near future, for the off-shore programme deals almost exclusively with arms.

"The American intention is to make the Ruhr once again into the greatest arsenal of Europe, in the interests of Western defence."

"Manchester Guardian," April 11th 1953.

DEATH SENTENCE FOR FORGER

The Leipzig District Court passed the death sentence on April 15th on a man found guilty of issuing huge quantities of forged ration cards with the aim of upsetting the East German economy.

The man, named Hans Leipner, was also found guilty of propagating the principles of National Socialism, and spreading lying rumours. Seven accomplices were sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging from ten years to life.

Evidence was given that Leipner had received forged ration cards for 60,000 lbs of meat, over 70,000 lbs of butter and fats, and 12,000 lbs of sugar from an agent of the American Intelligence Corps in West Berlin. The rations cards had been forged in the town of Konstanz, in West Germany.

GREAT GERMAN POET DIES

Erich Weinert, great German poet and fighter for a better world, died in Berlin after years of illness on April 20th.

Weinert, Holder of the National Prize of the German Democratic Republic, was born in Magdeburg in 1890. He learnt the trade of an engineer, and later became a teacher.

After the first world war he began to write the satirical poems which later made him famous throughout Germany; satires which attacked militarism, fascism and reaction.

Weinert fought the nazis inside Germany, and later in Spain, where he fought in the ranks of the International Brigade against the troops of Franco, Hitler and Mussolini.

During the second world war Erich Weinert found asylum in the Soviet Union, and continued the fight. During the battle of Stalingrad he was one of the brave German anti-fascists who crept up to the lines of the nazi troops to tell them, through loudspeakers and megaphones, the truth about the criminal war they were waging.

When the "National Committee of Free Germany" was founded, bringing together all Germans who fought Hitler, Erich Weinert became the chairman.

Returning to East German after the end of the war, Weinert was able to see the beginnings of something of what he had always dreamed — a decent, peaceable Germany, and a German state, the German Democratic Republic, which was not dominated by militarists and big businessmen.

During the past six years of his life Erich Weinert was chained to his bed by sickness, resulting from the imprisonments and privations of his earlier years, but even from his bed of pain he continued with enormous energy to work, producing book after book of poems and essays — books which have been an inspiration to the new generation of young Germans now growing up.

REPORT BOOKSHELF

In the Nazi Era by Sir Lewis Namier. Macmillan, London. 12s. 6d.

At a time when the former nazi diplomats, generals and industrialists are climbing back into power in West Germany, any reminder of the crimes which they committed in the past is valuable.

In his new book "In the Nazi Era" the noted British historian Sir Lewis Namier has done a useful job by analysing some of the more blatant of the apologists for German militarism who are flooding western bookshops and libraries with their reminiscences and autobiographies.

Sir Lewis Namier has performed the thankless task of combing through a number of these "revelations", and can point out that they amount to a defence of German aggression.

One of his comparisons of what these Germans said during the Hitler era and what they say today is contained in his chapter on Herbert von Dirksen, who was nazi Ambassador in London 1938—39.

The memorandum he wrote for the nazi Foreign Office on his period in London came to light after the war, and was published by the Soviet Foreign Office under the title "The Dirksen Papers". In this memorandum he had this to say about the anti-Semitic pogrom in Germany on November 10th 1938:

"The anti-Jewish demonstrations . . . produced an extremely strong reaction in England, partly based on emotion, . . . and partly deliberately fostered.

"All the anti-German and pro-Jewish elements went into action and unleashed an unbridled anti-German propaganda."

In von Dirksen's post war book, called "Moscow, Tokio, London" the story looked quite different:

". . . That clarification came in a terrifying form through the anti-Jewish persecutions enacted by Goebbels on November 10 . . . The disgraceful performance of that day — burning of synagogues, lootings and ill-treatments — produced throughout Europa a wave of loathing and indignation which silenced all talks. . . . Never in all my life did I feel such shame."

Many of the conclusions which Sir Lewis Namier draws are very questionable, but anyone who wants specimens of how German reactionaries twisted history before 1939 for their purposes, and how they are trying to twist it again now, should ask for the book at the public library.

Books Received

The Volunteers: A personal narrative of the fight against fascism in Spain. By Steve Nelson. Masses and Mainstream 832 Broadway New York 3. $ 1.00.

Koje Unscreened. By Wilfred Burchett and Alan Winnington. Published by the authors, Box 545, Peking, China.

West German Pastors Attack Terror Regime

More than one hundred Protestant clergy from the Rhineland and Saar strongly opposed the West German Government's attempts to suppress supporters of peace, when they met for their semi-annual meeting of the Rhineland Church Brotherhood at Saarbruecken on April 12th.

The pastors published a declaration stating:

"We cannot condone a situation in which people are arrested in the middle of the night simply because they desire peace, or because they have social contact with Communists.

"In particular, following the latest wave of arrests of political opponents of the Bonn Regime, the church must extend its support to those arrested. We must not abandon the Communists suffering behind prison walls."

The clergy who signed the declaration included Dr Hans-Joachim Kraus, Professor of Theology at Bonn University, Pastor Locher from Wuppertal, and Pastor Zimmer from Saarbruecken.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

Western newspapers have been making quite a feature in the past few days of reports about alleged food shortages here in the German Democratic Republic. Some of the reports have even gone so far as to talk of "famine".

On Sunday I was in Halle, an industrial town about 150 miles south of Berlin. In Halle, I attended a study group of young authors. These young men and women, who work in the factories, the offices and the agricultural cooperatives round Halle come together once a month to discuss their writing, and to hear samples of each others work.

Famine?

I went there to give them a short talk on newspapers in the western world, and as a specimen of the sort of lying report which I often met in the western press, I read them a story from the London Daily Telegraph dated April 13th, a story which appeared under the headline "Growing Threat of Famine".

As I read the story the eyes of my listeners got rounder and rounder, as they heard that they were starving, and when I finished they crowded round to look at the paper, because they found it very hard to believe that such nonsense actually appeared.

Now these young men and women — about 20 of them — were as good a cross-section of the population as you can get. They came from all walks of life in a dozen towns and villages, and they agreed unanimously that they had certainly seen nothing like a food shortage in the places they came from.

Difficulties Exist

There have been some difficulties in the past few weeks here, and nobody has tried to conceal them. The difficulties have been partly due to sabotage, partly to the failure of capitalist countries to fulfil trade agreements, and partly to sheer inefficiency of some officials unable to cope with new tasks. But these difficulties, mainly in the supply of fats, are being rapidly removed.

In any case, these difficulties were all of the nature that people had to use dripping for cooking instead of margarine — and a state of affairs like this is very far from starvation or famine.

I don't want to go into a comparison of the number of pounds of meat, sugar and so on that everyone here gets to eat, but there is one figure worth quoting, I think. In the German Democratic Republic every man, woman and child got 83 lbs of meat to eat in 1952. The equivalent figure for both Britain and West Germany was rather lower.

In sugar and fats too East Germans got more.

Most significant of all, of course, is the fact that the consumption figure is going up. From the first of May factory canteens will be getting twice the present quantity of meat and fat to prepare midshift meals for the workers, and all these canteen meals are off-theration, of course.

I am afraid the western journalists, and the government spokesmen in the West German capital of Bonn who give them the figures, will have to think up a better lie if they want any success.

Everybody here in the German Democratic Republic can afford to eat three good satisfying meals every day, even if they are not always luxurious. And that is more than many people in West Germany or in Britain can say.

Newstatesmanship

The London "New Statesman and Nation" recently sent a correspondent of Berlin to report upon conditions in East Germany. The correspondent, named Evelyn Anderson, published the first of her reports in the paper on April 4th, and I am eagerly waiting for the remainder of the series, since the first told me so many things about life here that neither I nor anyone else knew.

For instance:

"The 'intelligentsia' enjoys such highly coveted privileges as officially granted 'weekends without politics'."

The weather has been very fine for the past week or two, and I spent last sunday paddling a canoe round a lake on the outskirts of Berlin, and thousands of other people, certainly not all members of the intelligentsia, were boating, picnicing on the banks, and all the other things one does on a fine sunday in spring.

It was all pretty unpolitical, and none of the crowd on this lake or at any of the other beauty spots round Berlin had been "officially granted" anything, or regarded his weekend as a "highly coveted privilege".

Everyone in the German Democratic Republic is, of course, perfectly at liberty to spend their weekends just as they wish, with as much or as little politics as they wish.

I can only assume that some of the "refugees" whom Miss Anderson has been so busily interviewing in West Berlin have sold her this ridiculous story along with the other nonsense which they retail.

Poor Nazi

My attention has only just been drawn to an astonishing sentence passed on March 3rd 1953 in Bad Kreuznach, in the American Zone of West Germany. An S.S. officer named Kurt Tesch appeared before the Bad Kreuznach court charged with killing a captured American airman in October 1944. The court sentenced Tesch to 18 months nominal imprisonment, and then released him immediately on parole, which was a light enough sentence for a cold-blooded murder. The judge stated that the sentence was light because of the "mitigating circumstance" that Tesch had been "strictly brought up in the spirit of nazism".

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